

**MEDIA RELEASE:**  
**Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit**  
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## **Tips for Keeping Your Workplace Safe during the Covid-19 Pandemic**

Workplace outbreaks do happen even here in Leeds, Grenville and Lanark. We have seen workplace outbreaks across multiple sectors including the food industry, manufacturing, the trades, automotive etc. A COVID-19 outbreak in a workplace can potentially close your business or reduce productivity due to the lack of available workers.

Ontario has now identified new variants of COVID-19 in multiple jurisdictions of the Province. These new variants spread quicker and easier than the original variant of COVID-19. It is very important for workplaces to take necessary precautions to prevent the spread of COVID-19 within the workplace.

**Below are some tips to help keep your workplace healthy:**

1. Have a screening process in place. Ask employees to screen themselves for symptoms of COVID-19 every day. Be sure to screen visitors, inspectors and contractors that come into your facility to conduct work. The government of Ontario has created a worker and employee screening tool to assist <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/screening/worker/>
2. Sick employees must stay home. If employees start feeling unwell at work, immediately have them go home and encourage them to self-isolate themselves from others and get tested at a local assessment centre. COVID-19 assessment centre locations can be found at <https://healthunit.org/health-information/covid-19/assessment-testing-results/>
3. There are no social “bubbles” in the workplace. It is important to take a look at your workplace setting, whether it is indoors or outdoors, to ensure that employees are not in close contact. Those that can work from home should be encouraged to do so to reduce numbers in the workplace. Set up staggered schedules to reduce contacts. Maintain the same groups or crews to minimize contacts if there is a positive case in your workplace. Ensure work stations are a minimum of 2 metres (6 feet) apart. During those times when it is not possible to maintain 2metres (6 feet) separation, employees must wear a mask. If employees must be within 2 metres (6 feet) of a person who is not wearing a mask, they should add eye protection as well. Keep records of visitors and contractors who may be working or visiting and interacting with your employees - this will help with contact tracing should you have a positive case in your workplace.
4. Use of Masks. Well fitted cloth masks are critical to reduce the risk of COVID19 transmission. They are an added level of protection, in addition to the other safety measures. Everyone at a minimum should wear a 2 layered mask with tightly woven material with at least two types of material used in the mask; some workplaces require medical masks as well as eye protection.
5. Remember to consider your lunch and break areas. These areas should also be set up to allow employees to maintain a distance of at least 2 metres (6 feet) from every other person. Break

areas are areas where employees tend to remove their masks to eat, drink and visit. These common areas have been the source of COVID-19 transmission in workplaces.

6. All workplaces are required to have a workplace safety plan. This plan will help identify areas where employees may be at risk of contracting COVID-19 and the precautions necessary to prevent COVID-19 transmission. A template and an example can be found on our website at <https://healthunit.org/health-information/covid-19/business-re-opening/>.
7. If you do become aware of a worker that tests positive, contact the local public health unit for advice on next steps. Public health will provide guidance on testing and isolation of those who may have been exposed.

Sector specific guidance and resources to prevent COVID-19 in the workplace can be found at the Government of Ontario Website <https://www.ontario.ca/page/resources-prevent-covid-19-workplace>. For local information about COVID-19 visit our website at [www.healthunit.org](http://www.healthunit.org).

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